

The Crimson Wing

A Complete Novel Each Week in The Evening World

The Story of the FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR
Told from a New Viewpoint.

By H. C. Chatfield Taylor

By Arrangement with Duffell & Co.
Copyright, 1907, by H. C. Chatfield Taylor

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

Count Ludwig von Leu-Walram, a captain of Hussars, is at home on furlough. There he meets a boyhood friend, his cousin, Marcelle de Lumbach, a French girl, and declares to her that his affection for her remains. War is declared between France and Prussia, and Ludwig is ordered to join the staff of the Crown Prince, Ludwig, leading a small detail of Prussians a few days later while touring at a farmhouse finds Marcelle visiting there. A strong detachment of French chasseur enters Ludwig's command, killed by Marcelle, Ludwig escapes to bear with him to the front. Marcelle is taken to the French command to warn him of the German plan. A battle is fought, resulting in a French defeat. Ludwig discovers Marcelle about to be shot with other prisoners in the castle where the last French stand was made, and which Marcelle had inspired. He saves her. The Crown Prince arrives and demands Ludwig's report.

CHAPTER XIV.

(Continued.)

The Iron Cross.

THE young officer looked straight at his chief and spoke modestly, in the manner of a soldier:

"Pursuant to orders, Your Royal Highness, Capt. Egerton and I, with the men of our command, reconnoitred yesterday afternoon across the Lauter, entering the enemy's territory through the Mundat-Wald, near Roth. Toward dusk we got in touch with a division of the enemy going into camp near Wissembourg. His cavalry was surprisingly inactive, and we were able to skirt along the forest several kilometers to his rear, keeping well under cover of the woods. If we were seen by the inhabitants in the twilight, as seems probable, we were no doubt taken for a patrol of the enemy. The command wore forest caps, and with our light blue attires, braided in white, might pass, at a distance, for French hussars, especially as, before crossing the Lauter, I had secured a lot of red cambric which we wrapped around our legs when in the saddle."

"A clever expedient," interrupted the Crown Prince approvingly. Ludwig's eyes glinted with pride.

"About dark," he continued, "we came upon a small patrol of the enemy, and were obliged to beat a hasty retreat into the Mundat-Wald—evidently undiscovered, as no pursuit was made. We were well in the rear of the forest at Wissembourg, and thoroughly satisfied that one division of the enemy had been thrown forward hastily without supports. By making a long detour through the mountains we hoped to reach the frontier before daylight."

He hesitated.

"Continue," said the Prince impatiently.

"The horses were winded and the men were fatigued. We came upon a farmhouse in the forest. We found a peasant woman there alone."

"Alone," muttered the commander. The color rose in Ludwig's tanned face.

"It afterward appeared, Your Royal Highness, that my cousin, Mademoiselle de Lumbach, was concealed in a clothes-dress."

"A spy!" said the Prince, quickly.

"No, Your Royal Highness—not a spy," answered Marcelle hastily. "The peasant woman was my old nurse. I had hidden into the Mundat-Wald to visit her—I did not know my cousin was among them. It was very natural, sir, that I should hide."

"Very natural that you should hide," said the Prince, looking at her quizzically; "very unnatural that a young girl of your evident position should be alone in a forest in war time."

The Prince shrugged his shoulders coldly and Marcelle's eyes fell.

"Surely, sir," said Ludwig, "Your Royal Highness does not suspect my cousin of being a spy!"

"The enemy is always guilty until proved innocent," he answered, but there was a twinkle in his gentle blue eyes which Ludwig did not see.

"Continue your report, sir," he commanded.

Then Ludwig told modestly of the fight at the farmhouse and his escape on Marcelle's horse with the wounded Egerton. He dilated with glowing colors upon his cousin's bravery, giving her full measure of credit for saving Egerton's life as well as his own.

She listened dumbly—staring with lustreless eyes.

"Where is Capt. Egerton?" asked the Crown Prince, showing deep interest.

"In a peasant's cottage, sir, near Riedelsitz."

"A prisoner?"

"No, Your Royal Highness. The peasant is from Baden. He and his wife live alone. They can be trusted."

"Come, sir, make haste," interrupted the Prince sharply; "you left Capt. Egerton with the friendly Badener. Well?"

"I was forced to leave the winded horse of mademoiselle as well and go on afoot. Dawn had begun to break. I met some peasants in a field—I hid in a haystack. The

peasants were all about me—I dared not move."

The Crown Prince smiled. Ludwig colored and hesitated.

"From sheer exhaustion," he stammered, "I must have fallen asleep. When I awoke it was broad daylight. The peasants had gone—I could hear the sound of cannon."

Marcelle's heart beat wild with joy. The battle began and Ludwig reached the German lines. The surprise was not due to him. She seemed to touch heaven!

"I hastened to the sound of the guns," Ludwig went on, "and reached a forest. I used the Eighty-seventh Nassau Regiment debouching from the woods—my countrymen, sir."

"Well!" said the Prince suddenly. "The battle had begun, sir. The Eleventh Corps had already turned the French flank and my information was valuable. The headquarters were upon the heights of Schweigen—five kilometers across the battlefield. I was dismounted. It was impossible to report while the battle lasted. My countrymen were fighting."

He hesitated. The Crown Prince looked at him.

"You did what every Prussian officer would do—you fought."

"I reported to the colonel of the Eighty-seventh, sir," said Ludwig. "In the charge upon the Geiselsberg a company lost its officers; I was forced to rally it and take command. In the Geiselsberg castle I found my cousin serving as a Red Cross nurse."

"Your Royal Highness, I have reported."

For a moment the tall, fair bearded Prince studied the young soldier with his keen blue eyes. Meanwhile a gray haired officer of rank stepped forward from the door.

"Pardon me, Your Royal Highness," he interrupted. "Madness has prevailed. Capt. Count von Leu-Walram is a full report."

"What have you failed to report, sir?" said the Prince sternly.

"Nothing important, Your Royal Highness," he stammered.

The gray-haired officer smiled. "He failed to report, sir, that during the final charge upon the Geiselsberg position he scaled the high wall which surrounds the castle. In the face of a murderous fire from the windows he dropped into the courtyard and opened the gate for his young cousin, a veteran of three wars, sir, but I have never seen a braver act."

A murmur of astonishment ran through the room. Ludwig saw doily the admiring faces of his brother officers.

"Col. von Grolman," answered the Prince, "I thank you for supplying Capt. Count von Leu-Walram's report."

Then, with dignity and kindness in his face, he turned toward the young soldier.

"Capt. Count von Leu-Walram," he said, "on behalf of the army I have the honor to command, I thank you for your services to-day. I shall assign you to pleasure in recommending you for the Iron Cross."

Ludwig tried to quell the emotion rising in his heart. Through glimmering eyes he saw his young commander, broad-shouldered and magnificent—a second Ariovistus leading his warriors into Gaul. He could have kissed the ground on which he stood.

"Ah, sir!" he stammered at last, "I am unworthy such an honor."

"I am the better judge," answered the Prince, "and I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

H. CHATFIELD TAYLOR
AUTHOR OF THE CRIMSON WING

strange talk of treason—the mystery of the Geiselsberg castle! He understood at last.

As the story progressed the Prince smiled from time to time—smiled kindly. He was amused at the thought of this modern Maid of Orleans tramping through the storm to save an army, nursing wounded soldiers, rallying "Turcos on the battlefield, merely to atone for having been so thoroughly feminine. He thought her very romantic, very French, very much to be loved.

"My dear child," he said, when she had finished her story, "you heard your cousin say he did not reach headquarters. Let me tell you that yesterday, at 4 o'clock, the order to cross the Lauter was issued—the army to march at daylight, traversing the Bee-Forst by four routes and moving to the attack of Wissembourg. Your cousin's plucky reconnaissance in no way changed the order of events. Your treachery to France consisted merely in saving his life."

The girl looked up—a glow of happiness was in her face.

"Ah, Your Royal Highness," she murmured, "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

An amused smile stole across his handsome face.

"You are my prisoner, mademoiselle," he said, "and I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

"I am your enemy," he added, rising from his seat. "Should you lead any more French armies we might be driven back across the Rhine."

She seized his hand and touched it to her lips. "I shall release you on parole. That is, if you give me your word never to bear arms again. You are too valuable a general to lose."

uhlan trooper with a flag of truce, Marcelle sat alone in the saddle waiting. In the road ahead was a picket of French dragoons, and beyond among the beeches and the firs were the pointed towers of a gray chateau. With brimming eyes she saw an officer ride forward from the French outpost, saw the exchange of salutes, and when the brief parley was ended the Blue Hussar swung his hand to his brow and wheel his horse toward the group of uhlan on the green knoll beside her.

How splendid he looked, she thought, as he trotted up the high road, erect in the saddle, with sword clanking and sabre scabbard of silver, blue and red gapping against his charger's shining flanks, his handsome, sunburned face aglow beneath the red-garbed bushy with his sun-kissed time of white. How proud she was of this tall, blond enemy she loved; but she knew the parting must be a peace came—or forever—and she must wait her chance.

They said but little as they rode together toward the French outpost, for words seemed miserably unequal to their thoughts, but after a time he glanced up suddenly with a hopeful look in his blue eyes:

"Headquarters will be at Soultz tonight," he said eagerly. "If you give me a message to the Crown Prince, I would be safe for me to ride across."

"No, Ludwig, not until peace comes. Remember, my father is a General of France."

"Yes, Marcelle," he answered, "I understand."

He would have kissed her, then, before the dragoons and the uhlan—before the armies of France and Germany, had they been there—but in his burning glance she read his thought.

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so."

"Ludwig," she said, and as they watched the rain drops dot the ground, a strange, sad beauty upon her face, "I have a brown eye upon your face, and I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but I cannot tell you so. I have a heart full of love for you, but